

W5YI

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter

REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

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...and much, much more!**

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FCC FORUM AT ARRL NATIONAL CONVENTION

The American Radio Relay League held their 1992 National Convention between August 20 and 23rd at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott Hotel. As usual there were many forums, workshops and seminars on every amateur radio related subject imaginable for those in attendance. Hams flocked to the swap tables and industry exhibits.

There were approximately 3700 in attendance and from all reports, it was a very successful ham-fest indeed. The only hangup seemed to be the severe shortage of parking places which adversely impacted attendance. The fifteen different ham clubs that make up the Los Angeles and Orange County Amateur Radio Council did a admirable job of manning their appropriate stations.

W1AW/6 was on the air helping coordinate parking and directions. We heard that it was the first time that W1AW, the ARRL headquarters station had operated west of the Mississippi as a talk-in station. The forums were absolutely jammed! There was no shortage of hams wanting to absorb as much info as possible. Many of the attendees were no code Technicians who wanted to increase their knowledge which is a very healthy sign.

The banquet speaker was **Richard G. "Dick" Rutan, KB6LQS**, pilot of the "Voyager" who earned a place in aviation history with his nine day, non-stop, unrefueled flight around the world. Dick spoke on the special support he received from radio amateurs and relived his memories of

Voyager's historic flight.

The Saturday afternoon FCC Forum featured the Private Radio Bureau's Ralph Haller and Personal Radio Branch Chief John B. Johnston speaking on the subject of pending FCC rule making. Johnston introduced the Bureau Chief by telling the audience that Ralph Haller "...began his FCC career as a Radio Inspector right here in Los Angeles. He next moved to the Field Operations Bureau in Washington. Following that and other positions in the Office of Engineering and Technology and in the mass Media Bureau, he came to the Private Radio Bureau, where he quickly rose to the top position."

Remarks by Bureau Chief, Ralph Haller

"Good afternoon. I am delighted to be here. It is always a pleasure for me to meet with you at your Annual Convention. With any luck, I won't cause as much controversy as last year.

Let me begin by confirming that the new codeless Technician license is an unqualified triumph. Congratulations! It is one of the biggest success stories in the history of ham radio. Amateur radio is moving. The number of new licensees is up 100 percent. There is a new aura of expectation.

There is also a new aura of expectation at the FCC. We are experiencing an explosion in telecommunications. The public has caught on to the idea of how radio can improve the quality of life. It is

saying, "Give us more! Let us communicate with anyone or anything from anywhere ...instantly!"

The public has come to expect to view events on their remotely-controlled television sets -- even as they happen -- sports, wars, disasters, public debates, home shopping sales, and anything else of the slightest interest. Their cordless telephones, their cellular telephones, and their garage door openers have become basic necessities of life.

There are demands for new generations of broadcasting systems ...theater quality video and audio in your home ...interactive video data systems. There is also a lot of interest in a personal communications system. We hear estimates of the PCS market potential being ten times that of cellular telephone. People want intelligent highways and vehicles to route them around traffic jams and a multitude of other radio-based services. Right here in Los Angeles, there's an experiment in intelligent highways along the Santa Monica Freeway."

Radio spectrum in short supply

"I hope you were able to view the documentary 'Empire of the Air.' It was shown on PBS in January. I found it to be very informative. There is one critical thing that our radio pioneers had available, however, that we are in short supply today ...unused spectrum. New communications systems, unfortunately, are going to require spectrum.

Fiber optics can carry much of the fixed point-to-point traffic. But ours is a society on the move. We do not want to be tethered to a wire or to an optical fiber. We want to make the best possible use of our precious time. We want to communicate while we are driving, while we are walking, and while we are doing those many things that we must do each day at places where there is no wireline. That means radio spectrum.

That radio spectrum can only come from two resources. First, advances in technology will make it possible for us to better use the Super-High and Extremely-High frequency bands and we look to the amateur community for new technology in these bands. Secondly, technology can help us to use the existing VHF and UHF bands more effectively.

We are looking at possibly having to "refarm" some of our land mobile VHF and UHF spectrum in order to meet the demand for land mobile systems. The challenge that faces the users, the suppliers, and ourselves is, 'How we can best meet the ever growing need for land mobile communications?' The competition for new licenses is so great that we use a lottery to pick the winners. Just last year, when we opened

the last VHF band, we received over 59,000 applications!

To make that new personal communication system a reality, for example, the Commission has proposed spectrum for emerging technologies in the 1.85 to 2.20 GHz range. These frequencies are currently being used for point-to-point microwave systems."

Amateurs at the forefront of technology

"Virtually every communication system now being designed or contemplated is a digital system. Here is one area where the amateurs are in the lead. You have wholeheartedly taken to digital computers. The amateur community senses, as we do, that digital-based communication technology promises to bring to the public innovative systems having capabilities that even now stretch our imagination.

The amateur service is the vanguard of communications technology. It is the one place where persons who are fascinated by the marvel of radio can enjoy a personal satisfaction from understanding and using the technology. Your record is magnificent. There is clearly a vital role for amateur radio to shoulder in helping scale the barriers to new systems.

The notion of broadcasting, for instance, began when listeners overheard amateur stations exchanging weather reports and baseball scores. Amateurs built the first land mobile systems. The first hand helds were built by amateurs.

The first satellite station ever authorized by the Commission was an amateur station. Amateur operators pioneered low Earth orbiting satellites. Commercial system designers are using your packet technology. The list goes on and on.

The capability of being able to reach any other person anywhere -- or at least reach his answering machine -- is near at hand. Quite frankly, we're enthusiastic about moving on to these new challenges. We have some very big fish to fry, and I am confident that we can count on you. You have that uncanny knack of adapting emerging technologies to ingenious, practical communication systems. You are a resource that is on the cutting edge of the very technologies that these new systems will require."

Amateurs are efficient, effective

"These new systems are going to require engineers to design them and technicians to install and maintain them. For that reason, the amateur service is extremely important to the viability of these new systems, and to the United States economy. Amateur radio is a "can-do" movement. Thousands

I am a currently licensed Advanced, Extra Class amateur radio operator and wish to be a volunteer examiner. I have never had my station or operator license revoked or suspended. I do not own a sig-

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER EXAMINER? under the W5YI Report Program? If so, please send a copy of your Extra Class license, the following signed statement, and a SASE

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upon thousands of you are dedicated to helping people become involved in radio and electronics. Some of you are teaching. Some of you are helping with the question pools. Some of you are helping to prepare exams. Some of you are administering exams. Some of you are coordinating exam sessions.

All of this volunteer work has not gone unnoticed by the FCC. Your volunteers are making the continuation of the amateur service feasible. The FCC has always been a small agency. A decade ago, we had about 24 hundred employees. We're down to about 16 hundred today. We must carefully select our goals and then attain them in the most effective way possible.

So, when you suggested that the Novice exams could be simplified and standardized by moving them to the VEC System, we heard you five nine plus 20 dB! The Notice of Proposed Rule Making currently open for comment is based upon an ARRL petition and a similar one from Fred Maia [W5YI]. You are right. The time has come to take a hard look at the Novice exam system."

Technician is preferred entry path

"Until last year, most newcomers elected to enter the amateur service at the Novice class. During the last full year before codeless, 88% of the new hams started at Novice. Ten percent entered at Technician, and two percent entered at one of the higher grades.

Now, Technician is the entry level. About 15% of the entrants are Novices, while 80% are Technicians. By including the Novice exams in the VEC System, the application form can be greatly simplified by eliminating the separate certification and the Novice exam instructions. One standardized system would avoid the confusion that now exists because of the two different systems."

Temporary licensing of visiting foreign amateurs

"In another area, we issue about 2,100 one-year reciprocal permits annually to amateurs from the countries whose governments have signed reciprocal agreements with the United States. The only way a ham from a country that does not have the reciprocal agreement can get on the air is to pass the exams. Both of these procedures are time consuming and probably now worth the effort for a two-week trip.

A new rule making now being considered would complete the whole process during one quick visit to an exam session, either before or during the visit. The VE's would accept the foreign license as proof of qualification in eight of the nine operational and technical

topics contained in your question pools. The topic that is not covered by a foreign license, obviously, is Part 97. The VE's would administer a short examination on those rules in the question pools that are most applicable to the type of operation in which the visitor plans to engage. The VE's would explain immediately any rule that the visitor needs clarified. The VE's would issue, on-the-spot, a CSCE [Certificate of Successful Completion of Examination] good for 60 days. There would be no waiting for a license or permit to arrive."

Prohibited communications

"There is yet another area where the FCC responded to a League suggestion. We have been hearing for a long time that Section 97.113, the so-called 'no business' rule, often stands in your way to providing more public service communications. We recently issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making to revise the rule.

The well-meant purpose of the "no-business" rule was to help preserve the character of the amateur service. There are many within the amateur service, and elsewhere, who believe strongly that it is overkill. Many of your calls and letters ask if some type of communication or other is prohibited because it contains some minor business implication.

Quite frankly, as frequency managers, we have always been more-than-a-little uncomfortable in being forced to read the rule to you. It says, "except as necessary to providing emergency communications, NO business communications on your frequencies." No big business ...no little business ...no minuscule business ...no radio club business ...just NO business ...period!

There are, quite obviously, many types of communications having some trivial business content, such as ordering a pizza, or making a reservation for a motel room, that your stations could transmit without compromising the amateur service one whit. The challenge, however, always comes down to just how to write a simple, easy-to-understand, rule that does the job ...a rule that allows your stations to transmit such harmless communications without throwing open your frequencies to those who would exploit them commercially. Your thoughts on this critical matter are important. The comment date is October 1 and the Reply Comment date is December 1. Please let us know how you feel."

Special call sign system

There is still another area where we are attempting

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to respond to your requests: call signs. The time is here to do something about that.

There are nearly 15 million call sign combinations that can be used. From a purely regulatory standpoint, one call sign is as sufficient as another. Within the amateur community, we all well know, call signs have come to take on far greater meanings. They are highly treasured holdings.

There are hams who have held the same call signs for most of this Century. Some hams have distinguished their call signs by gaining fame within the amateur service and elsewhere. It is no wonder that they want to pass on their beloved call signs to heirs, to close friends, or to their radio clubs. Some want their call signs retired permanently, much as a ball team retires a star player's uniform number.

For a variety of reasons, hams want personalized call signs much as motorists want personalized license plates. A personalized call sign, for instance, might help identify with your particular life style. The letters might stand for your initials. A personalized call sign might enable you to make a statement about something for which you feel very strongly.

You are intensely proud of your call signs. You display them on your auto tags, your clothing, and elsewhere. You customarily address each other by your call signs, rather than by name. Your affinity for your call sign has a profound and healthy effect upon rule compliance. The risk of losing your call sign is probably our greatest deterrent to violative operation.

Gettysburg processes around 125,000 amateur service licenses annually. It uses a highly automated system. The annual labor cost is about two and 1/2 work years. It does not now have the capability to issue specific call signs routinely.

Gettysburg hasn't been able to issue personalized call signs for almost 15 years. Some of you old timers may remember the old manual special call sign system. It had a very limited eligibility. It required six people to do the processing more than were required to do all other amateur license processing.

Things are changing. Gettysburg is in the process of obtaining new computer software. So the timing may be right. Perhaps we may be able to offer you a personalized call sign system within a reasonable time. At least we have it under active consideration. Don't hold your breath, but do stay tuned.

So there you have it. A changing world of communications for everyone, with the amateurs at the center of the universe. In my view, PCS is as important as the invention of the telephone or television, and will change our lives every bit as much. The amateur service rules are becoming more flexible -- and that's new opportunity for you. So I challenge you to make

amateur radio an active participant in the future and not merely a service to exchange tid-bits during rush hour."

Personal Radio Branch remarks

John Johnston said that as of October his branch would also be overseeing Part 13, the Commercial Radio Operator Regulations. Right now, the Personal Radio Services include Part 95 (General Mobile Radio, Citizens Band Radio and the new Interactive Video Data Service) and Part 97 (Amateur Radio Service, Amateur Satellite Service and RACES - the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service.)

On the subject of amateur submitted petitions for rule making, Johnston asked the ham community to "...do a better job of researching your hot idea before shooting off a petition. We can better serve you by using our time to work on good petitions rather than dismissing bad ones.

"Another aspect of your petitions where you can improve is to include information on the affect your proposed changes would have upon your license structure, operator privileges and question pools. As you know, these are always contentious issues. We do not want to inadvertently stumble into those mine fields!

You should check with your VEC Question Pool Committee members before you file your petition. They can provide you with information such as how many questions would be affected by your proposed changes. ...The Branch would prefer to work with one omnibus proceeding per year for the amateur service. That would be more efficient for us, and it would assist your VEC's, your VE's, the instructors and the publishers, by limiting the number of times the questions have to be changed."

Handicapped code credit

"We are receiving questions about the handicapped code credit. The question usually goes something like this: "Why did so and so get code credit? Everyone knows that he is simply too lazy to learn the code. His doctor just signed the papers.

As you know, the FCC has made it possible for otherwise qualified people, who, because of a severe handicap that prevents them from passing the 13 or 20 words-per-minute code test, to obtain a higher class license

That calls for a medical judgement. The FCC is not qualified to do that. Neither are VE's qualified to make medical judgements. Nor are VEC's. The FCC recognizes only a medical judgement made by a

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physician licensed to practice medicine in the United States. If you have first hand knowledge that fraud has actually occurred, send us the details.

It appears to us, however, that in some cases, the doctor doesn't really understand what it is that he is being asked to do. No wonder. The examinee has no incentive to explain it. We are looking for a way to present the message in a form the doctor will actually read and consider seriously before signing that certification.

We need to make the doctor understand that he, or she, is being asked by a person who has already passed a 5 words-per-minute telegraphy examination to certify that, because of a severe handicap, the person is unable to pass a 13 or 20 words-per-minute exam. If the doctor signs the certification, the person will be exempted from the examination. Before signing, therefore, it asks the following items be carefully considered:

- Telegraphy is a method of electrical communication that the amateur community strongly desires to preserve.
- The FCC supports that objective by authorizing additional operating privileges to amateur operators who increase their skills to 13 and 20 words-per-minute.
- Normally, to attain these skills, intense practice is required. Annually, thousands of amateur operators prove by passing examinations that they have done so.
- Your VE's make exceptionally accommodative arrangements for handicapped persons.
- The VE's are relying upon the doctor to make a medical determination. The doctor must decide if the person's handicap is so severe that he/she could never pass the examination even when your VE's use their accommodative procedures.
- This exemption process is not intended for a person who simply wants to avoid expending the effort necessary to acquire greater skill in telegraphy.

Gettysburg is planning to incorporate this message in the doctor's certification on the Form 610. We have also asked your VE's to look for other ways of getting the message to the doctor.

In closing, John Johnston invited the amateur community to "...put your comments into the official record. File them with the Secretary of the FCC. Those rule makings are:

- (1.) **Prohibited Communications.** PR Docket No. 92-136. The comment period is open until October 1. (Reply December 1.)
- (2.) **Novice Exams to the VEC System.** PR Docket No. 92-154. The comment period is open until

October 9. We particularly need to hear from the VEC's on this one. (Reply November 9.)

- (3.) **Visiting Foreign Operator.** PR Docket No. 92-167. The comment period is open until October 26. We also need to hear from the VEC's on this one. (Reply November 30.)"

How to file comments with the FCC

To submit formal comments, you must file an original and five copies of all comments and reply comments. If you want each Commissioner to receive a personal copy of your comments, you must file an original plus nine copies. To file informally, you must file an original and one copy of your comments. It is **very important** that you specify the Docket Number in the heading. Send all comments to: Office of the Secretary, FCC, Washington, DC 20554.

BURTON DENIED AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE

On August 18, 1992, FCC Administrative Law Judge Edward J. Kuhlmann granted the motion of the FCC's Private Radio Bureau to deny **Richard A. Burton, ex-WB6JAC**, of Harbor City, California an amateur radio license.

WA6JAC's ham ticket was originally revoked in September 1981 for malicious interference, failure to properly identify his station and using obscene, indecent and profane language.

Burton refused to go off the air and was finally arrested on April 30, 1982. On June 8th, 1982, Burton was found guilty in federal court of unlicensed amateur operation and obscene language violations. He was sentenced to eight years imprisonment, all but six months of which was suspended to be followed by probation. While the obscene language violation was reversed on appeal, the unlicensed amateur radio operation charges were upheld.

Eventually, after serving a prison sentence, Burton was placed on five years probation, which ended December 17, 1989. On March 10, 1990, Burton was once again convicted of operating an amateur radio transmitter without a license and placed on probation and fined.

On December 20, 1991, the Bureau denied Burton's application for amateur station and operator licenses because of his extensive ten year history of radio-related violations. The Private Radio Bureau filed a motion for a summary decision on July 31, 1992, to determine in light of his many radio violations whether Richard A. Burton was qualified to hold an amateur radio license. The judge agreed that Burton should not be a Commission licensee.

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AMATEUR RADIO CALL SIGNS

...issued as of the first of August 1992:

Radio District	Gp. "A" Extra	Gp. "B" Advan.	Gp. "C" Tech/Gen	Gp. "D" Novice
0 (*)	AA0JP	KG0AB	N0TRP	KB0KPN
1 (*)	AA1DH	KD1JX	N1NGN	KB1AIU
2 (*)	AA2KN	KF2JW	N2SBN	KB2PIA
3 (*)	AA3BN	KE3EI	N3NCS	KB3AHH
4 (*)	AC4TL	KQ4DG	(***)	KD4ROY
5 (*)	AB5HJ	KJ5DJ	(***)	KB5UJV
6 (*)	AB6NC	KM6YP	(***)	KD6MJH
7 (*)	AA7QP	KI7FO	(***)	KB7PJZ
8 (*)	AA8IH	KF8WK	N8VFG	KB8OFS
9 (*)	AA9ER	KF9KU	N9QLL	KB9ICN
N. Mariana Is.	AH0O	AH0AJ	KH0AW	WH0AAT
Guam	NH2B	AH2CP	KH2GJ	WH2ANA
Johnston Is.	AH3D	AH3AD	KH3AG	WH3AAG
Midway Is.		AH4AA	KH4AG	WH4AAH
Hawaii	(**)	AH6MA	WH6IM	WH6CPW
Kure Is.			KH7AA	
Amer. Samoa	AH8E	AH8AE	KH8AI	WH8ABA
Wake W. Peale	AH9C	AH9AD	KH9AE	WH9AAI
Alaska	(**)	AL7OK	WL7FR	WL7CGC
Virgin Is.	NP2U	KP2CA	NP2FT	WP2AHS
Puerto Rico	(**)	KP4UC	(***)	WP4LIX

CALL SIGN WATCH: * = All 2-by-1 "W" prefixed call signs have been assigned in all radio districts. Group "A" 2-by-2 format call signs from the AA-AK block are now being assigned to Extra Class amateurs.

** = All Group A (2-by-1) format call signs have been assigned in Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico. Group "B" (2-by-2) format call signs are assigned to Extra Class when Group "A" are depleted.

*** = Group "C" (1-by-3) call signs have now run out in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and Puerto Rico call districts. According to the rules (adopted by the Commission Feb. 8, 1978, Docket No. 21135), Technician/General class amateurs are next assigned Group "D" (2-by-3 format) call signs when all Group "C" have been assigned.

Upgrading Novices holding a 2-by-3 format call sign in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and Puerto Rico call areas will no longer be able to request a Group "C" call and will be automatically assigned another more recent 2-by-3 format call sign if they do! The FCC will not be going back and reassigning unused "K" and "W" 1-by-3 format call signs.

[Source: FCC, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania]

JULY AMATEUR LICENSING STATISTICS

<u>JULY</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	
New Amateurs:					
New Novices	1324	1665	1662	1024	
New Tech's	272	269	2932	2752	
Total New:	1673	2003	4676	3843	
<u>Upgrading:</u>					
Novices	1734	2164	1670	836	
Technicians	520	636	764	*596	
Generals	349	460	463	409	
Advanced	<u>276</u>	<u>311</u>	<u>321</u>	<u>309</u>	
Total:	2879	3511	3218	2150	
<u>Renewals:</u>					
Total Renew:	178	73	107	65	
Novices	21	10	12	9	
<u>Purged:</u>					
Total Dropped:	1477	1673	21	10	
Novices	764	776	21	3	
<u>Census:</u>					
Indiv. Oper.	461286	490402	525574	575113	
Change/Year	+24020	+29216	+35172	+49539	
<u>Individual Operators by Class:</u> (and % of total)					
<u>Extra</u>	<u>Advan.</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Technic.</u>	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Total:</u>
<u>July 1989</u>					
49047	101060	116021	110750	84355	461286
10.6%	21.9%	25.2%	24.0%	18.3%	100.0%
<u>July 1990</u>					
52440	104041	118846	123943	91232	490402
10.7%	21.2%	24.2%	25.3%	18.6%	100.0%
<u>July 1991</u>					
55783	106732	121505	144593	96961	525574
10.6%	20.3%	23.1%	27.5%	18.4%	100.0%
<u>July 1992</u>					
60081	109215	124359	182696	98762	575113
10.4%	19.0%	21.6%	31.8%	17.2%	100.0%
Club/					
RACES &	<u>(1989)</u>	<u>(1990)</u>	<u>(1991)</u>	<u>(1992)</u>	
Military:	2474	2444	2431	2431	
Total Active:	463760	492946	528005	577544	
% Increase	+5.5%	+6.3%	+7.1%	+9.4%	
(* = Does not include Technicians upgrading to Tech Plus)					

(* = Does not include Technicians upgrading to Tech Plus)

NUMBER OF AMATEURS BY CALL SIGN GROUP:

Group	Extra	Advan.	General	Technic.	Novice	Total
A	34456	685	249	7	0	35397
B	3574	28129	54	6	1	31764
C	13826	43704	66939	83274	49	207792
D	7979	36579	57011	99346	98710	299625
Other	246	118	106	63	2	535
Total	60081	109215	124359	182696	98762	575113

[Group "A"=2X1 & 2X2; "B"=2X2; "C"=1X3 "D"=2X3 format.]

[Source: FCC Licensing Facility, Gettysburg, PA]

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• The FCC in Gettysburg, PA, recently published an interesting breakdown of the **age of new amateurs entering the ham radio hobby**. About half of all newcomers are between age 30 and 50; the average age being 37. Here are the figures for July 1992 - and fiscal 1992 which begins Oct. 1, 1991:

Age Group:	July 1992	Year to Date	% of Total
Under 11	233	369	0.8%
11-15	378	2732	6.3%
16-20	238	2478	5.8%
21-30	692	8286	19.3%
31-40	1029	11867	27.6%
41-50	768	9054	21.0%
51-60	371	4443	10.3%
61-73	250	3041	7.1%
Over 73	74	771	1.8%
TOTAL	3833	43041	100%
Average Age	36.75	37.87	

• On August 5th, the FCC proposed two bands of frequencies at (1610-1626.5 and 2483.5-2500 MHz) for the **Mobile-Satellite Service (MSS)** including the use of low-Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. LEO's were pioneered in the amateur service. The FCC said these systems are expected to offer a wide range of new and low-cost services, such as two-way voice communications, facsimile copies and data messaging, with a potentially worldwide scope of service.

• The Western Washington Amateur Relay Association has sent out a press release stating (1.) **WWARA has adopted the Texas 220 MHz band plan**. They especially like the spectrum set aside for packet as well as ACSSB and, (2.) **WWARA has become the first noncontiguous region in the country to seek affiliation with the Mid-America Coordination Council, MACC**. Chairman **Mark McKibbin, WR7V** said "WWARA has become increasingly dismayed with the ARRL's Board decision making processes and felt that by joining what has become the nation's largest organization of

coordinators it would have a bigger voice in the policies that affect them." He acknowledged that "...the League's policy of ignoring the nation's coordinators in its recent adoption of a new 6 meter band plan was a major factor." **WWARA** is encouraging other coordination organizations in the Pacific Northwest to follow.

• **Mike Stone, WB0QCD** and **Gary Allison, N0FYI** are starting a new trade newsletter to be called **Amateur TV Today!** The publication (\$15.00 year) will be distributed ten times a year and cover fast, slow-scan, narrow band and digital TV. (Tel. 319/452-3628 for more info)

• Another new special interest ham publication is **YL World, a Magazine for Female Amateur Radio Enthusiasts**. Publisher **Maureen McClain, N5FFB** and Editor **Connie Dunn, KB5LES**, have long felt that the YL's need something beyond the information available in most of the ham magazines. Connie also writes the YL column in **QST** and (until last month) **Worldradio**. (Tel. 817/565-9633 for more info.) Six times a year, Subscription: \$12.50.

• **New electromagnetic compatibility (EMC) regulations coming to Great Britain and the European Community**. A new European Community EMC Directive (89/336/EEC) requires manufacturers of virtually all electrical and electronic equipment and their authorized representatives to ensure that the products they sell in the Community comply with EMC protection requirements.

Manufacturers must construct their products so that (a) the "electromagnetic disturbance generated does not exceed a level allowing radio and telecommunications equipment and other

apparatus to operate as intended" and (b) products have an "adequate level of intrinsic immunity to electromagnetic disturbance" to enable it to operate as intended.

Approved products will carry a "CE" approval marking, even if they are sold in the UK only. Non-compliant products will be banned from the marketplace. The new rules go into effect after a transitional period - currently scheduled for the end of 1995.

Each member of the European Community will assign an agency to issue **EMC Type Examination Certificates**. While home-brew ham radio rigs are exempt from the new directive, commercially available amateur radio transmitters will require an EMC type examination certificate. (Source: 1992 Radiocommunications Agency information sheet, London, England, UK.)

• **Radio Shack is going in the build-to-order PC business!** Starting this fall, Tandy will begin delivering personal computers by mail. Radio Shack customers will simply order their PC from a laundry list of options. Assembled PC's with loaded software will be shipped within a few days.

• Did you see the recent article about **Wayne Green, W2NSD/1** in a financial magazine? *Forbes* did a feature on how Green started "73" ham radio magazine in 1960, *Byte* in 1975 ...followed by other computer magazines (*Microcomputing* and *80-Micro* among them.)

With money received from selling his computer publications, Green launched *CD Review*, a compact disk magazine and other music publications. Still later, Green went into the record business. **W2NSD** now has five record labels including *Greener Pastures* and *Green with Envy Records*. A few months ago, Green sold *CD Review* for \$8 million.

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UNSCHEDULED HF PACKET MEETING IN L.A.

KV4FZ notified the court that he would be appealing the conviction and would be filing a formal motion the week of August 31st. Schoenbohm still may have to turn himself into the detention center, however, if he is unable to get the sentence postponed pending the appeal. Supposedly he was to be incarcerated at the detention center at Homestead Air Force Base in Florida but this facility was badly damaged during Hurricane Andrew and his fate remains up in the air.

Packet messages scooting back and forth indicate that many amateurs believe the ARRL has fallen very short in their obligation to properly manage the STA and use the information gained during its operation to come up with a workable set of rule changes to support a viable HF digital network. They believe participants in the STA should have been given a chance to present their findings and knowledge gained from operation under the STA to the ARRL and their Digital Committee.

The unscheduled meeting included several members of the ARRL Digital Committee, several key members of the ARRL Headquarters staff, and several HF Packet STA members from the Southwestern Division. The purpose of this meeting was to seek, if possible, a solution more acceptable to the packet community than the current ARRL proposal for rule-making which

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is to effectively kill HF packet ...and opinion not shared by the League's Digital Committee.

The meeting ran over three hours (past midnight) and hammered out an alternative that would allow automatic, unattended operation. This proposal was presented to the ARRL Executive Committee and Board of Directors meeting early the next morning. While the proposal itself was not "adopted" or "accepted" at the Executive Committee/Board of Director's meeting, the development "process" used the night before was sanctioned.

ARRL's position on HF packet

It was decided that the ARRL will sponsor a meeting including five HF packet STA members to hammer out an alternative. This meeting, to be held in late September, will allow representation of HF packet STA members on a national level to present alternative solutions to the loss of the STA. It boils down to the Committee sitting down to listen to their alternatives not their complaints.

The following is a quote from ARRL president **George S Wilson, W4OYL**. It was recorded on Saturday afternoon, August 22nd during the Open Forum held at the ARRL Convention in Los Angeles and constitutes the League's position on Auto/Unattended Packet Operation and Forwarding:

"...What if every General was authorized to put an unattended HF station that just comes on the air whenever the computer says to come on the air? Carrier sensing is not yet to the point where it can serve as a legitimate deterrent. If you were operating a CW QSO, the carrier sensing may very well come on between the words of your transmission and zap you with a packet with the next transmission.

We're not against packet! The League is for packet! You better believe we're for packet! The League is for digital operation ...but not to run the rest of the hams off of the bands! Will it? It has that potential! Is there a solution? I don't know! The Digital Committee did not seem to think there was.

We met for 4-hours this morning ...the entire Board, except one. What we are going to do is ask those stations who hold a STA -- and that's where the big flack's been coming from -- to get together! You pick your representatives and you have a meeting with the Digital Committee on September 26th, and you see if you can come up with a solution; and if so, we'll darn sure listen! We want to be responsive! We want to listen, but at the same time, we want to listen to both sides. Now, that having been said, that's the present position and that's where we are!..."

HF Autoforwarding, pro and con

Make no mistake about it. HF packet carries a lot of traffic and while new technologies such as satellite

and hi-speed terrestrial networking are developing, they are not ready to take up the current load of traffic that is being handled on HF and will not be ready for several more years to come. The cost of these new technologies are still prohibitive for the average ham. It costs several thousand dollars to set up a fully operational SatGate station.

According to reports, one of the biggest objections to HF unattended packet forwarding is coming from foreign 20 and 40 meter phone operators who object to automatic mail forwarding at 14.100 to 14.115 MHz and at 7 MHz where our ham band does not line up with the 40 meters in ITU Regions 1 and 3.

HF operators are also worried about the future. If fully automatic operations are generally authorized and this somehow leads to a deterioration in spectrum accessibility by other traditional users of those frequencies, it will be very difficult to revert back to the previous use of the spectrum if HF packet becomes firmly entrenched.

And there is no fair way to allow only a few amateurs to run fully automatic stations and exclude others who might want to run such stations. The situation has now degenerated into a dispute between long term amateurs who favor traditional use of HF spectrum (rag chewing, voice network operation and DXing) and newer amateurs and technical types who lean toward more innovative modes and experimentation.

The alternative proposal

Those in attendance at the Los Angeles meeting believe there is a way to resolve the situation to everyone's satisfaction. The recommendation (someone said it originated with TAPR) is to:

- (1.) Allow full automatic operation on all authorized data modes in the following band segments:
10.125-10.150 Mhz
18.093-18.118 Mhz
24.915-24.940 Mhz
- (2.) Require that fully automatic stations have a means of assuring that their automated transmitters cannot transmit continuously for more than two (2) minutes per transmission.
- (3.) Allow the STA to continue until six (6) months after the FCC adopts these rules to allow the existing mail forwarding system to migrate to these sub-bands without undue disruption to the service.

The supporters of this plan argue that there are no foreign phone operators on these band segments and these "WARC" bands are allocated worldwide;

thus there is no conflict in spectrum assignment. If the fully automatic operations authorized prove to be unmanageable, no permanent damage will have been inflicted on other existing amateur operations.

Some of those in attendance insisted on keeping a 20 meter segment available for automatic forwarding.

Hurricane Andrew traffic affected

The following packet message from **Derrik Cullison, KC6NZN** of San Diego indicates that some HF operators are trying to make their point by refusing to handle the massive amount of health and welfare traffic generated by Hurricane Andrew. Cullison is chairman of SCAPS, the *Southern California Association of Packet SYSOPS*.

"It is enough of an embarrassment to amateur radio that intentional jamming and harassment of HF emergency and relief nets is occurring. If now the National Traffic System is impaired due to the protest actions of some system operators and others, the negative publicity will further undermine our image. Worse, we will diminish our mission to support the American people in their time of need.

All system operators, please set aside your feelings and biases, and immediately, indeed enthusiastically, release each and every piece of NTS traffic routed through your systems in a timely manner. All amateurs, let's stop encouraging others to refuse NTS traffic. This is the very time we can prove our worth, or worthlessness, to our nation. Don't undermine one of the great services amateur radio has to offer."

Obviously some sysops (system operators) are refusing NTS traffic. Their attitude appears to be, "...if the ARRL wants to protect CW and SSB let those modes carry it.") And there has also been criticism of the meeting as being the unwanted LA solution. The packeteers seem to want the ARRL to go away -- end its involvement -- and let the HF packeteers deal with the FCC in making the rules. There is a lot of League bashing going on and there seems to be a big push to widen the embargo on ARRL/W1AW related traffic.

Statement from ARRL Digital Committee chairman

To round out this article, I telephoned the Chairman of the ARRL's Digital Committee, **Ed Juge, W5TOO**, of Burleson, Texas, to get his side of the controversy. Ed gave me the following statement:

"The STA group purports to be extremely concerned that the digital committee's recommendation will destroy long distance forwarding. There are several reasons why that is not the case. First, APLINK (an AMTOR-based forwarding network) uses a semi-automatic forwarding mode already. It works quite well

and scans frequencies on various bands which means it is less susceptible to propagation problems. Packet semi-automatic forwarding could be adapted to work just as effectively.

Second, while I don't believe it could ever carry the entire traffic load, satellite messaging is performing very well over long distances. Third, and most important, the Digital Committee has been offered a nationwide 9600 baud fiber optic network free of charge that connects most of the largest U.S. cities together. Southwest Network Services in Austin, Texas, working through the Digital Committee will provide circuits over which long distance messages can be forwarded on a completely unattended basis.

While this draws some criticism as not being pure ham radio, it certainly is the most effective use of combined technologies to provide the services to VHF/UHF packet users that the STA operators claim to be concerned about. In case of emergency, the VHF network only needs to get traffic to the nearest operating gateway just as they do today.

This will not be a dial-in network, but will be controlled through a central computer which polls stations in the network on a regular basis. I would caution hams against contacting Southwest Network Services directly. The reason we have not talked about this option previously is that I wanted to be sure SNS was comfortable with it being made public at this time.

The Digital Committee had to be conscious of the rights of all spectrum users. I personally responded to the ARRL questionnaire in favor of automatic forwarding. After reading over 500 responses from my fellow hams, I had to reverse my opinion. It just doesn't make sense that live amateur operators should have to deal with robot stations suddenly appearing on their frequencies and ruining a QSO. With semi-automatic forwarding, a live operator must at least listen and initiate the forward cycle. The station on the other end is in the fully automatic mode.

The combination of semi-automatic forwarding on HF, a fast reliable fiber optic terrestrial network and satellites should provide amateur radio with the best of all possible worlds. I have enjoyed being an STA HF operator and I have great respect for the tremendous job that has been done there. However, if more than twenty or so stations tried to inhabit a single frequency, only chaos would result.

I am looking forward to the September meeting and hope that representatives of the STA group may come up with really creative solutions that would allow fully automatic HF forwarding while taking into account the rights of others and the potential problem of too many stations interfering with each other."